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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [PHUM](#) [UK](#)
SUBJECT: THE UK'S APPROACH TO PEACEKEEPING REFORM

REF: A. USUN 65
[1](#)B. LONDON 266

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Greg Berry, reasons 1.4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Summary. Following the January 23 UNSC debate (reftel A), the UK has made more effective UN peacekeeping a policy priority, and Prime Minister Gordon Brown may plan to raise it during the visit to Washington which he has requested. HMG plans to negotiate a PRST or UNSCR to address the design, decision making, and review as well as the execution of peacekeeping operations during its UNSC presidency in August. However, in the face of ballooning UN assessed costs, an HMG budget crunch, and the falling Pound, the UK's ability to bring about significant changes to UN peacekeeping institutions may be limited to procedural shifts or statements of intent, rather than major substantive change (reftel B). End summary.

Strategic, Evidence-Based Approach

[1](#)2. (C) FCO Peacekeeping Team Leader Nicola Murray (please protect throughout) previewed for poloff February 11 HMG's thinking on how to make UN peacekeeping more effective. Murray agreed with UK PermRep's reftel A comments that the Chad PKO mandate renewal represented an improvement as it included a clear mandate, performance benchmarks, timelines and performance reviews, but she noted the mandate's negotiation had been arduous, especially amongst the P3. This has led HMG to conclude that the UNSC process for mandating PKOs needs to change, including a culture shift in the way the P3 does business.

[1](#)3. (SBU) On the design, decision making, and review of PKOs, Murray previewed the following principal issues:

a) The lack of conceptual clarity in the UNSC about where robust peacekeeping ends and peace enforcement begins. In HMG's view, robust peacekeeping means that a force should have the ability to defend itself, to protect civilians, and to tackle localized opposition. HMG, however, does not think the UN should undertake peace enforcement, defined specifically as a peacekeeping force having to combat

"systematic opposition," as troop contributing countries (TCCs) lack the capability to perform such a mission or are unlikely to offer such highly skilled troops.

b) Mandates do not reflect what is achievable on the ground. PKO mandates need more military and expert input based on strategic UN SYG reporting. Some ways to help the UNSC make more informed mandates include the following, all of which argue for more time for UNSC consideration of new PKO mandates:

- bolstering the Secretariat staff in order to improve the quality of information, analysis, and military advice to the UNSC.

- More joint briefing to UNSC by Office of Military Affairs (OMA) and Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) briefings (with political-military specialists).

- More high-level discussions of the political and military issues.

- Early involvement of all relevant parts of the UN system.

c) The UNSC adopts resolutions mandating PKOs before the SYG is able to secure commitments from TCCs to make the mission viable. (NOTE: The UK offered no practical solutions to this issue. END NOTE.)

d) TCCs should be more substantially involved in the mission planning process, so that force generation concerns are reflected in the force size, geographical coverage, and

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robustness of the mandate.

e) All missions should have clear goals and key benchmarks that are updated through mandate renewal. The SYG's reports should be based on these benchmarks and goals. A strengthened DPKO should assist the UNSC by providing:

- more strategic reporting on existing operations and more focus on defining objectives while measuring progress against them.

- end states that are more clearly defined with achievable exit strategies.

- proposals to aid transition from peacekeeping into stabilization.

f) The UNSC fails to decide on individual PKOs in the context of broader strategic decisions. The UNSC too often makes decisions based on individual PKOs without accounting for and evaluation of available resources or priorities among all PKOs.

g) The UNSC must realize that mandating a PKO is not always the right solution. The UNSC must ensure that expectations of a PKO are realistic and appropriate for a particular situation.

14. (SBU) In addition, PKOs with robust mandates must have sufficient command and force contributions. There is a shortage of resources to meet many PKO critical needs, such as police. To address these shortfalls, the UNSC should consider solutions to the following:

- Stating clearly the specific challenges for each PKO and involve TCCs from the outset.

- Providing TCCs with enough training and capabilities to engage in robust peacekeeping.

- Increasing participation of EU and U.S. forces in UN PKOs.

-- Creating a strategic reserve/surge capacity for key PKOs and examine the possibility of making asset and troop movement from a well-equipped mission to an over-stretched mission easier.

--Increasing the global pool of deployable police and civilian experts. For success, the UNSC must not view peacekeeping operations exclusively as a military effort, but as a part of a joined-up UN effort encompassing many UN agencies.

15. (C) According to Murray, HMG wants to work with the U.S. and France initially, then with other UNSC members to move these ideas forward, culminating with a PRST or UNSCR that addresses peacekeeping issues during the UK's UNSC presidency in August.

Comment

16. (C/NF) The real spanner in the works is HMG's budget situation, as political will alone may not be enough to bring about these sweeping changes to the way peacekeeping operations are done. In the face of ballooning UN assessed costs, an HMG budget crunch, and the falling Pound, the UK will be forced to cut its discretionary spending on peacekeeping (reftel B). If HMG moves forward on a wholesale review of UN peacekeeping, it seems the USG's interests will be well served by ensuring that the UK's initiatives for reform do not steer into discussions of a cost-based approach to UN-mandated PKO activity. End comment.

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